Bobby Kennedy Coquettes With the Anti-War Forces, P. 3

Peace Corps Appeal to the White House

"Every bomb which falls in Vietnam destroys the dialogue between men which we work so hard to achieve."

—One of the former 400 Peace Corps and other U.S. volunteers abroad (including five who served in South Vietnam) who sent the President a letter last week asking him to stop the bombing of North Vietnam, to accept direct participation of the NLF in peace talks and to discontinue the present military buildup with a view to disengagement.

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The Funny Things That Happened Before Bombs Resumed

In private the White House is telling critics that it dare not end the bombing of the North without a military quid pro quo lest it be caught in an ambush by the Republicans. The fact is that if the Johnson Administration had wanted an excuse to extend the bombing pause while peace explorations continued, it had a way to do so which would have kept domestic opponents off base and imposed just those conditions on a bombing pause the White House says it wants. It need only have focused attention on the apparent decline in infiltration from the North. It could have treated this as a possible signal of Hanoi's readiness to reduce its military activity. It could have extended the bombing pause while this signal was investigated. And it could thereby have notified Hanoi that the bombing would be resumed if the evidence showed that this levelling off had not continued. Washington in this way could have made cessation of the bombing dependent on a reciprocal and continued diminution of the North's military effort, and left itself free to resume if the price were not paid.

No Major Contact Since November

The Kennedy Administration "conned" Khrushchev out of the Cuban missile impasse on far less tangible grounds. The failure to engage in a similar operation in this case reflects not a difference in diplomatic skill but a difference in will. The Kennedy Administration desperately wanted a peaceful way out. *The Johnson Administration is trying to avoid a peaceful way out because it thinks it can achieve a military victory.* This is why the White House and the Pentagon have been doing their best to discourage the many reporters, myself included, who have tried to check on the fragmentary reports which indicate that Hanoi has in fact been de-escalating. One of the stories which precipitated a flood of frustrated inquiries was a cable by Jim Lucas from Saigon (*Wash. Daily News,* Feb. 6) that the North Vietnamese had "pulled all but one of their main force divisions" back across the border. He reported that this "in large measure accounts for the sharp decrease in enemy infiltration and the odd fact that they have had no major confrontation with Americans since Operation Attleboro near the Cambodian border last November."

This story elicited a wide variety of skilful diversionary statements at the Pentagon but no denial. An effort was made instead to argue that this showed the efficacy of the bombing. This was reflected two days later in a Joseph Alsop column which reported, with jubilation, that "the flow of North Vietnamese troops into South Vietnam has been reduced by 75% in the last six months." Alsop said this was "almost certainly because of the bombing—there is no other imaginable reason." It is not impossible to imagine that this was Hanoi's way of signalling its readiness for reciprocal de-escalation. All this throws some light on the cryptic reply made by Secretary Rusk at his press conference three days later when he was asked whether the rate of infiltration from the North was "significantly lower than it was last year." Rusk did not deny a falloff in the rate of infiltration. Instead he replied that he did not "know of any information that the infiltration has *stopped*" (our italics) "or that they have themselves undertaken a level of infiltration that bears with it political consequences." It is a pity he was not pressed to explain what he meant by "political consequences?" Did he mean there was a point at which the de-escalation would be accepted by us—a signal that Hanoi was already—as we insist—reciprocating?

(Continued on Page Four)

Farewell to A. J. Muste

A. J. Muste was a wanderer on the face of the earth, a Witness in the ancient sense, driven by an impossible compulsion, to fulfil a truly Christian mission. Every Minister at all worthy of his calling knows the daily agony of compromise. Muste refused to compromise. He resigned his first pastorate out of opposition to World War I, declaring simply that wars were not in the spirit of Christ. He left the Church for the labor movement. Like that carpenter's Son, he was a lifelong agitator, a radical pacifist. He once estimated that in 50 years he had been arrested 30 times. He was a friend of Gandhi's and he brought back the tactics that flowered in the students' non-violent campaign against segregation in the South, the most successful application in the Western world of non-violence. He lived a life of poverty, and in the Middle Ages would have been recognized as a saint. His latest pilgrimage for peace was to Hanoi. "The world needs a revolution," he once wrote, "in feeling, in sensitivity, in orientation, in the spirit of man." He was the kind of racist we desperately need—his concern was the race of man. It is a measure of his worth, and of his place in the peace movement, that though he died at 82, he leaves so sharp a sense of loss, a gap in the leadership there is no one to fill.

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The U.S. Votes Against CB War in the UN But Still Uses Gas in Vietnam

The Senate In No Hurry to Prevent Future Bobby Baker Incidents

MOLIERE WOULD HAVE enjoyed the Senate debate last week on the "Bobby Baker" rule reforms put forward by Senator Clark (*D. Pa.*). One called for full financial disclosure by Senators and Senate employes. The other would have forbidden Senators or Senate employes to have any interest in any lobbying, and it would also have forbidden any employe of the Senate to take part—as Bobby Baker did—in allocating campaign contributions among Senators, an easy way to repay favors and even to buy votes.

An Anthology of Hypocrisy

The objections raised would make a delicious anthology of hypocrisy. Stennis, chairman of the Senate's slow moving ethics committee, objected that Clark's proposals were too blunt: "This matter must be worked on and put to microscopic treatment," he said. "Much of it is as delicate as a Swiss watch." Bennett of Utah, vice chairman of that same committee, thought Clark's proposals "come perilously close to infringing upon the private affairs of the Senators." Scott of Pennsylvania objected that "professional and confidential relationships" might be breached. Curtis of Nebraska thought they might make "individuals of high standing" reluctant to serve in the Senate. Monroney of Oklahoma wanted to know why the Clark rules would allow gifts of less than $100 to a Senator. "I think—and I say this seriously—" Clark responded at one point with asperity, "that it takes more than $100 to bribe a Senator." The disclosure rule was shelved 45 to 30, the rule against lobbying was tabled next day 37 to 22. The majority excuse is that the Senate must wait for a report from the Stennis committee. It is more than three and a half years since the Baker case broke and the Senate is still waiting, quite patiently.

IN DECEMBER THE U.S. voted for a resolution adopted by the UN General Assembly calling for strict observance of the Geneva Protocol of 1925 prohibiting the use of asphyxiating, poisonous or other gases, and of bacteriological warfare. This seems to have had no impact whatsoever on our use of gases in Vietnam. This began with the use of tear gas to "flush out" civilians from shelters in which guerrillas are suspected of hiding. It has moved on to the spread of tear gas over large areas in so-called "bomb-free zones" to force the whole population out of their shelters and into the open where our bombers can "work" on them. More than 5,000 American scientists, including 17 Nobel prize winners and 129 members of the National Academy of Sciences, last week sent a petition to the President declaring that a dangerous precedent is being set by our use of riot gas and anti-crop chemicals in Vietnam. The President was urged to end their use in Vietnam, to reaffirm the policy of not initiating the use of chemical and biological weapons, and to institute a White House study "with a view to maintaining and reinforcing the world-wide restraints against CB warfare." Dr. Matthew Meselson, professor of biology at Harvard and one of the petition's initiators, told a press conference that perhaps 6 percent of South Vietnam's rice crop area had been "dusted" (how lovely are our euphemisms!) by crop killers. The spectacle will not add to our reputation for benevolence with Asia's hungry millions.

Cleared for Top Secret—and Nude Photos

"The trial of three adults in their early 20s who pleaded guilty in Arlington County (Va) Juvenile Court on a total of 10 counts of contributing to the delinquency of two teen-age girls was excluded to the public yesterday 'in the interest of national security.' Juvenile Court Judge Berton V. Kramer ruled in favor of the exclusion motion after hearing the defense attorney argue that the persons had 'no previous record', 'occupied very sensitive positions' and had access to 'top secret information.' No official information beyond the specific charge was released on the cases.

"It was learned, however, that the three persons, two men stationed at Arlington Hall * and the civilian employe wife of one of the men, were accused of taking nude photographs of two girls, aged 16 and 17. Judge Kramer said that no disposition was made at the trial and that the case had been continued two years on the good behavior of the defendants."

—Washington Post, *suburban news, P. B11, Feb. 10*

* Arlington Hall houses many military men.

The War in South Vietnam As Pictured In A Letter Home From The Field

"Why talk about the war or the weather? It's just one tawdry incident followed by another followed by another. We medivacced a woman yesterday who had been burned by a white phosphorus grenade perhaps five days earlier. She could not move because grenade frags were imbedded in her body from head to toe along her left side. . . . She was about three months pregnant and we were able to find the clearing by listening to the sounds of her mother weeping over her. . . .

"A 27-year old Buck Sergeant who loves to read Dennis the Menace comic books (after pistol whipping an elderly man, breaking his neck and leaving him to die): 'If that s——— e——— interpreter hadn't come along, I could have finished the m——— f——— off with my 45!'

"Our platoon medic: 'I don't want to treat any gooks for wounds—everybody understand?'

"My fire team leader: 'Remember back in November when we raided that village at night and found that family with that Schwinn bicycle? They looked so goddamned funny crying after we kicked the spokes in I liked to bust a gut laughing.' The average annual income around here is about $85; that Schwinn is probably several years of labor. How the VC would utilize it I do not know. . . . The policy of our gang in treating every Vietnamese-Gook as a VC terrorist with a grenade secreted in his trachea that he's ready to burp up when your back is turned is surely a self-fulfilling prophecy. . . . The villages that I have seen raided in the last six months may or may not have harbored VC before we raided them; they all did by the time we had finished."

—From a letter recently received by a member of the Contra Costa (Calif) Citizens Against the War in Vietnam from a young man serving in the war. It was published in the CCCAWV Newsletter.

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On China As on Vietnam, Bobby "Teases" the Anti-War Forces

Even Javits Now More Outspoken Than Kennedy on the Bombing

A POLITICAL "TEASER": When I was a boy a certain kind of girl was known as a certain kind of tease. She promised a lot but she never delivered. Robert Kennedy seems to be that kind of a politician. He's always flirting with the liberals but manages to avoid coming to the point. On Vietnam he's been titillating opponents of the war at home and abroad by saying cryptically that he has "reservations" about the bombing of the North. This was his line at Oxford recently. Kennedy seems to feel that a "reservation"—like an advance phone call to a busy night club—will save him a seat with the anti-war forces. But everybody has "reservations" about the bombing of the North. Some think it's too little and some that it's too much. In the Senate the other day six Democrats called for an end of the bombing. Kennedy was not among them. They were Morse, Gruening, Hartke, Pell, Clark and McGovern. Now Kennedy has been outflanked even by his Republican fellow Senator from New York, the unctuous and usually ambiguous Javits—even Javits has come right out and said we ought to stop the bombing or restrict it to supply routes leading South. Where does Kennedy stand on the bombing?*

The Illusion of Dissent

We recommend the vivid picture of the Senator and his entourage by the New Left's Robert Scheer in the February issue of *Ramparts* Magazine. "The Kennedy rhetoric is dangerous," Scheer writes, "precisely because it provides the illusion of dissent without its substance." An example is the Senator's address on China policy at the University of Chicago, Feb. 8. Months of mountainous effort by a whole battalion of experts went into the delivery of this slick little mouse. The language is brilliant, the quotations marvellous, the subtleties a delight: the Kennedys may treat writers capriciously but they have a flair for picking the best. But while the speech skillfully needles Johnson it does not venture any alternatives of its own.

*** He finally deplored resumption.**

McNamara Boasts of Rising Arms Sales Abroad

"During the period FY 1962 through FY 1966, the total program has resulted in sales [of arms abroad] of $8.1 billion. . . . In addition we have outstanding sales commitments amounting to about $3 billion. . . . For the domestic economy these sales will ultimately mean about 1.4 million man-years of employment spread throughout the 50 states and over $1 billion in profits to American industry."

—McNamara to Senate Armed Forces Com. Feb. 23

"If we choose to remain an Asian power . . ." Kennedy says at one point and begs the biggest question of all. "Of course," Kennedy said at another, "the shadow of the Vietnam war hovers over all these deliberations. That is itself an immense and complex subject. . . ." Indeed it is. We are asked to marvel at the speech because, as the *Baltimore Sun* pointed out, it represents a "180 degree turn" from the days when Kennedy was helping McCarthy hound those still trading with China. But Kennedy in Chicago could still say "Out of those long years emerged the China we see today—a China suffering from all the monstrous injustice and corruptions which a Communist regime inevitably imposes." This cliche is nonsense. Whatever the injustices in China, they can hardly match the recent Nationalist past. As for corruption—this is the least corrupt regime, virtually all observers agree, that China has had in generations. A regime that could go through the recent famines without mass starvation, though it had (unlike India) no outside aid, is a mighty step forward from the past, whatever its current convulsions.

What needs most to be said is that we can no more be an Asian power than China can be a Pan-American power. The slower we are to learn that lesson the greater the cost in life and treasure. The Johnson Doctrine of the Manila Conference was as dangerous as if Peking were to declare a protectorate over Latin America. This needs to be challenged but Kennedy did not challenge it.

When They Do It—It's Sinister: But When We Do The Same Thing It's Beneficent

"We have seen large numbers of boats and other vessels dashing south along the coast of North Vietnam to resupply their forces in the southern part of North Vietnam * and in the demilitarized zone. Now, this and the large number of incidents indicates that they are not particularly interested in an actual cease-fire."

—Secretary of State Rusk at press conference Feb. 9

"Saigon, Feb. 11—In making their case for resumption of the bombing of North Vietnam, U.S. officials here and in Washington reported with considerable detail that North Vietnam was moving supplies closer to South Vietnam during the Tet holiday cease-fire—evidence, they said, that the enemy is not genuinely interested in a de-escalation of the war. But American military authorities neglected to mention that on Thursday, the first full day of the cease-fire, a one-day record of 2,762 tons was set for American cargo delivered by air to units in the field.

* Not in South Vietnam, note, but in their own country.

"The daily Air Force communique in the past has routinely listed the volume of cargo and the number of passengers carried. But yesterday, the same day the report on the increased flow of materials in North Vietnam was released, these figures were missing and there was only a line about 'normal resupply missions.' An Air Force officer said the U.S. headquarters command had 'told us not to' release the cargo figures yesterday. When the Air Force was questioned again, the figures finally were supplied. They showed that U.S. planes, not counting truck and ship movements, carried 7,402 tons of supplies and more than 17,000 men during the first three days of the cease-fire."

—Chicago Daily News *Service in* Wash. Post *Feb. 12*

"In Washington a State Department spokesman confirmed the U.S. was continuing resupply missions in Vietnam. Asked how this differed from North Vietnamese efforts, he said the North Vietnamese activity was 'clear evidence of their intent to continue their aggressive action' while the U.S. was committed to combat aggression."

—Added by the Washington Post *to the story above*

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What Johnson Really Means When He Talks of His Desire for Peace

(Continued from Page One)

Why Did Rusk Go So Far?

Why did Rusk have to go that far in his reply to what was, after all, a simple question of fact? Was it perhaps because this more qualified reply was made necessary by the diplomatic and intra-Administration dialogue going on behind the scenes? Through Prime Minister Wilson, the U.S. apparently had been telling Premier Kosygin that the bombings would "not be called off permanently" (as the *Washington Star* reported Feb. 13 just before the bombings resumed) "unless North Vietnam takes some reciprocal step on the ground—such as reducing its flow of men and supplies to the South, or pulling back some of its regular troops already in South Vietnam." There are people in the government who believe just such a scaling down of activity has been underway. It is as if Rusk were saying to them and to the other side that only if the de-escalation were greater, or movement of men and supplies stopped altogether, would we be ready to grant "political consequences", i.e. reciprocal concessions. There are other people in the government who wanted to rush resumption of the bombing before this scaling down became so obvious as to make it difficult to start bombing again. "There is evidence" the latest issue of *U.S. News & World Report* (Feb. 20) said "that Hanoi, while not willing to make any open deal with the U.S., has already started cutting down its infiltration of the South—perhaps hopeful that the U.S. will finally decide to end the bombing without a public discussion in return." It reported that the rate had fallen from 7,000 a month in the first six months of last year to 1600 a month from July through October. Instead of focussing attention on these hopeful signs the U.S. military has done its best to blur or hide them. "Figures for the past three months," *U.S. News & World Report* continued, "have been deliberately held up by military officers in Saigon." The excuse is that the figures are not yet conclusive. Westmoreland's command is not so scrupulous about figures when they serve its purposes.

The crux of the issue is not the reliability of the statistics. It lies in deeper political and psychological considerations. *U.S. News & World Report* put its fingers on these when it said some top officials believe that while Hanoi wants the bombings to end "and will reduce their infiltration in return," it will not "publicly announce any reduction for fear of damaging Viet Cong morale in the South." The U.S. on the other hand—no doubt for that very reason—wants an "open confirmation" from Hanoi. The U.S. is waiting for "North Vietnam to admit before the world that it has not only been directing but actually feeding the fires of aggression in the South." As the *Washington Star* reported (Feb. 10) after the Rusk press conference, "What is lacking in Hanoi's proposal, U.S. officials say privately, is North Vietnam's utter refusal to acknowledge formally its involvement in the war in South Vietnam. . . . Until Hanoi does take responsibility for its role in the war, any talks with its leaders would be futile, officials believe." But if Hanoi takes responsibility for the war, it excuses the U.S. bombings and declares itself guilty of aggression. More important, it would thereby open itself to a demand not only that it stop sending men and supplies but that it call off the rebellion in the South as the price for an end to American attacks upon it. The U.S. has in effect upped the ante for peace because it thinks that its military juggernaut can crush the opposition, especially at a time when the Sino-Soviet split makes supply more difficult. When Johnson says he wants peace, he means surrender.

Howard Walk-Out on Goldberg Speech

"They expect us to fight for peace in Vietnam when we don't even have peace in Washington. They've got a lot of gall to send somebody here to talk to us colored people about peace. . . . They are drafting all the young black men. We don't have any business fighting in Vietnam when we don't have any rights here."

—From TV interviews with the 40 students and 5 faculty members who walked out just as Ambassador Goldberg began his speech on "America's Peace Aims in Vietnam" Feb. 10 at Howard University.

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